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Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of an instruction-simulation video tape in training counselor candidates to use counselor-tacting response leads (CTRL). A CTRL is a counselor response which is intended to help the client to be more specific about what he is saying. Subjects were four post-master's degree students enrolled in a practicum in counseling. Subjects responded to 20 isolated client responses, participated in a 10 minute instructional treatment; then responded to 20 more client response cuts. The data support the proposition that exposure to the video tape had a significant effect on the counselor's tendency to use CTRLS. With respect to the counselor's responses to the actual video tape, there were significantly more CTRL's during the post instruction simulated situations than during the preinstruction simulated situations. The data further suggest that these learning effects generalize to actual counseling situations. More CTRL's occurred in post instruction counseling situations than in preinstructional counseling situations. Finally, the use of these responses does not appear to hinder the development of other important counselor behaviors, and may actually facilitate their development. (KJ)

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INSTRUCTION-SIMULATION IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION: ITS USE AND EFFECTIVENESS^{1/}

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss the application of instruction and simulation to the preparation and training of counselors in graduate programs in counseling. A statement of the problem will be given, and the technique of instruction-simulation defined and explained. Finally, general findings of a recent pilot study will be interpreted and evaluated in light of one solution to the stated problem.

The Problem

In advanced courses in counselor education and in practicums in counselor-education programs, many hours are spent in analyzing the verbal behavior of the counselors-in-training as an aid to developing adequate counselor response leads for effective counseling. Existing training procedures require the counselor candidate to interact with a "live" client. There can be no control over the following: client's behavior, presenting problems other than the one specified by the client for counselor assistance; the manner in which the client engages in verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication; and the possible naivete of the counselor in this live situation.

Traditional experiences in counseling is a "hit-and-miss" affair, with the counselor supervisor hoping the counselor candidate has "hit" all of the experiences with clients that would help the student develop the necessary behaviors for good counseling, and hoping the counselor candidate will "miss" clients that could actually be harmed due to level of counseling competence. There is evidence that counseling can, and does, lead to deterioration in clients (Bergin, 1963, 1966; Barron and Leary, 1955; Cartwright and Vogel, 1950; Rogers, 1961; Truax and Carkhuff, 1964). The possibility of client harm is increased, no doubt, by allowing counselor trainees to "practice" on live clients, which is what practicum is--supervised practice in counseling. This need not, and should not, be the case, in that many counselor behaviors can be learned by more effective means, with better results, and much less chance on anyone being hurt.

The technique of instruction-simulation brings about maximum control of the counseling student and client interaction. No longer a "hit-and-miss" affair, but directly enabling a counselor education program to shape certain counselor behaviors while removing any possible harmful effects to live clients.

Instruction-Simulation

Instruction is the usual intraverbal manner of teaching. This instructive, or didactic, approach includes the following: (1) explaining, the making of something clear or intelligent; (2) expounding, the stating or setting forth the meaning of something; (3) simple instruction, the imparting of knowledge, directions and commands; and (4) interpretation, the bringing out of the meaning of something.

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By definition, simulation is to assume the appearance of, without really being. Utsey, Wallen and Beldin (1966) have indicated some success in that the results of their simulation techniques to prepare reading teachers were "quite good." Their instructional package (Informal Reading Inventory Process) has aided reading teachers in-training "in correctly assessing each child's functional level and placing him in a text of appropriate difficulty" (p.574).

Wallen (1966) states that "instructional simulation is a powerful tool for developing the referential resources of reading teachers. By showing student teachers examples of the specific behaviors of children which characterize different reading levels and different word-attack skills in a setting which exaggerates these characteristics and makes them more obvious, student teachers can develop referential categories for the different behaviors."

Kersh (1961) used multiple projection techniques to present realistic problems to teachers in-training and asked them to react as if it were a real situation. In using an image size comparable to a 17-inch TV monitor for stimulus presentation in the instructional situation, Kersh (1964) concluded that the smaller less realistic projection may be most effective in instruction. Adams supports the contention that realism is not a primary consideration in transfer of training (Adams, 1962; Twelker, 1966,a). It appears also that simulation affects actual performance (Ulcek, 1965; Kersh, 1965), and that simulation techniques provide for more economy of time (Kersh, 1965).

Using 28 counseling practicum students (experimental and control groups) Beaird and Standish (1964) constructed a simulated environment to train counselors to: (1) discriminate between cognitive and effective client responses and (2) use counselor response leads in ways to facilitate more client effective responses.

This study, using audio and no video stimuli, yielded the following results: (1) the experimental group demonstrated a significant gain in their performance; (2) more gain than did the control group; and (3) there was significant difference between experimental and control groups in post-training interview performance.

In a recently reported study in classroom simulation, Twelker (1966,b) states that the results indicate "that giving prompts that guided student's subsequent responses, made learning more efficient in terms of number of sessions required for learning, number of trials required to meet criterion, and adequacy of student's first response in training on each problem" as compared with not giving the same prompts.

In summary, research supports the following conclusions: (1) simulation as an instructional technique is effective; (2) the use of a TV monitor for stimulus presentation is appropriate; (3) realism is not a primary consideration in transfer of training; (4) simulation affects positive actual performance; (5) simulation provides more economy of time (and overall long-term expense); and (6) the application of simulation techniques to counselor training has shown to be feasible and effective.

The instruction-simulation technique, then, is simply: (1) the "telling" of what behaviors the supervisor wants the counselor candidate to learn, (2) the defining and interpreting of these behaviors, and (3) providing the candidate with experiences in which he can practice these behaviors. A few of the many basic counseling behaviors in which the counselor in training should be competent before

working with live clients are: (1) the use of reflective response leads to content and to affect, (2) the use of counselor tacting response leads, (3) the reinforcing of talking behavior in a nontalkative client, (4) increasing counselor's effectiveness in working with a client who desires test reinforcing support, (5) increasing counselor's awareness of responding to client nonverbal cues, etc.

By using the instruction-simulation technique, counselors will have opportunities to develop appropriate behaviors in selected areas, either prior to their enrolling in an internship or practicum program, while in counseling practicum, or as on-the-job upgrading of their professional competencies. Such instructional programs will enable counselors to attain a high degree of competence in working in select areas in a safe, nonthreatening atmosphere in which they can progress and develop at an individual pace and without having the possibility of harming any client while they are learning.

A Pilot Study^{2/}

The use of instruction-simulation was employed to train counselor candidates in the use of Counselor Tacting Response Leads (CTRL). A CTRL is a counselor response which is intended to help the client to be more specific about what he is saying, for examples: (1) "Tell me what you mean when you say you can't concentrate?", (2) "How do you feel inside when you say you are nervous?", (3) "Tell me a specific time when you felt especially left out?", and (4) "Tell me other times when it has seemed to you as though you were left out?"

Method

Subjects. The subjects used in this study were four post-master's degree students enrolled in a practicum in counseling in the Division of Counselor Education at the University of Illinois. There were two men and two women. The subjects were uninformed with respect to the experimental propositions and unaware that their behavior in the therapy sessions was to be analyzed for the present study.

Apparatus. A video tape consisting of 40 isolated client responses was developed. Ten different clients (five boys and five girls) appeared in random order in the 40 segments of the tape, each making a rehearsed response from a given script. Each client responded for approximately 15 seconds, then remained on the screen for 15 additional seconds, during which time the subject was instructed to respond to the client. All responses made to the video tape by the subject were audio recorded for later scoring. The first 20-client response tape cuts served as a premeasure, the last 20-client response cuts served as a postmeasure. Between the pre- and postmeasures, a ten-minute instructional treatment was presented to Ss. This instruction was designed to describe the meaning and purpose of CTRLs, the four categories of such responses, and when the use of such response leads is appropriate. Incorporated into this instructional sequence were demonstrations of the use of CTRLs.

Instruments. The 40 frames of the video tape were scored as to whether or not they were of the CTRL category. This procedure allowed the researchers to study learning in the instructional situation. Actual counseling sessions of the candidates were taped and similarly scored to study the generalization of this learning.

^{2/}Delaney, D. J., Eisenberg, S., and Moses, H. A., "The Effectiveness of Instruction-Simulation on the Training for Counselor Tacting Response Leads," Mimeographed, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, May, 1968.

In addition, the candidates' tapes were rated on the Counselor Rating Scale for the following dimensions: Lack of Awareness--Intellectual Insight; Bland-Personal Impact; Timidity--Courage to Explore; Defensiveness and Rigidity--Openness of Self; Resistant--Understanding; Coldness--Warmth; Disorganized--Logically Organized; Dependence--Independence; and, Overall Ineffectiveness--Overall Effectiveness. Each dimension was rated on a six-point scale, e.g., from Lack of Awareness (1) to Intellectual Insight (6). This was performed in order to study what effect CTRLs had on other counselor behaviors.

Procedure. In order to use the Ss as their own control both pre- and post-treatment, three-week time periods were used. One tape of each counselor candidate in a live initial counseling session was randomly selected from the first and third weeks of the first time period. This period preceded the treatment experience. During the second week of the next three-week time period, the Ss were presented with the audio-video auto-instructional tape. This tape consisted of 20 isolated client responses; the ten-minute instructional sequence which was followed by another 20 isolated client responses. One tape of each counselor candidate in a live initial counseling session was randomly selected from the first and third weeks of the last, and final, time period, i.e., succeeding the treatment experience.

Results and discussion

1. Learning in the instructional simulation experience. In support of the first proposition immediate learning did take place as a result of the instructional simulation experience. The comparison of the frequency of CTRLs from pre- to post-measure of the instructional tape was a 100 percent increase, or a frequency score of 34 to 65, representing the mean scores of three independent judges. Pearson Product Moment correlated between pairs of the three judges yielded an average interjudge reliability of .84. The decrease in the use of other than CTRLs was from a 46 on the premeasure to a 15 on the postmeasure. There were 80 responses on both the pre- and postmeasures..

2. Generalization of learning. In order to study the effectiveness of the instructional simulation experience in actual counseling, one-tailed t-tests for correlated means were performed on the scores of tapes made by the candidates in initial counseling sessions. These tapes, all 50 minutes or more in length, were analyzed by prepracticum graduate students. The entire tape was independently scored by at least two of these prepracticum students.

Using the experimental group as their own control, an analysis of the tapes of the counselor candidates in counseling in an initial session between the first and third weeks of the first three-week period was performed. There was a mean decrease in the frequency of use of CTRL responses; however, this decrease was not significant. An analysis of the results of the tape scores between the last taped session before the instructional simulation treatment and the first taped session after the treatment demonstrates the impact the treatment had on the subjects. There was a significant increase. The first posttreatment taped session was made one week after the treatment. An examination of the results of the analysis made on the two taped sessions following the treatment demonstrates a significant mean decrease; however, there is still a much larger mean score on the use of CTRL between taped sessions 1 and 4.

3. Counselor Rating Scale. As each tape was scored by the judges they were instructed to rate the counselor on the Counselor Rating Scale.

There appears to be a general trend toward a positive increase over time on these scales. The increase on Personal Impact and Overall Effectiveness was significant at $p < .10$, while the increase on the measure of Warmth was significant at $p < .05$. Thus it appears that with the increase in CTRLs there is at least no reduction in other ratings of counselor effectiveness. On the contrary there are some data in support of the proposition that counselors are perceived as being more active.

Conclusion. This study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of an instruction-simulation video tape in training counselor candidates to use counselor-acting response leads. These verbal responses are essential to behavior modification therapy since they operationally define specific behavioral events and the stimulus conditions in which they occur. The data support the proposition that exposure to the video tape had a significant effect on the counselor's tendency to use CTRLs. With respect to the counselors' responses to the actual video tape, there were significantly more CTRLs during the postinstruction simulated situations than during the preinstruction simulated situations. Further the data suggest that these learning effects generalize to actual counseling situations. More CTRLs occurred in postinstruction counseling situations than in preinstruction counseling situations. Finally, the use of these responses does not appear to hinder the development of other important counselor behaviors, and may actually facilitate their development.

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